

and Management Assistance Act of 1995, I am transmitting the District of Columbia's Fiscal Year 1999 Budget Request Act.

This proposed Fiscal Year 1999 Budget represents the major programmatic objectives of the Mayor, the Council of the District of Columbia, and the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority. It also meets the financial stability and management improvement objectives of the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997. For Fiscal Year 1999, the District estimates revenues of \$5.230 billion and total expenditures of \$5.189 billion resulting in a \$41 million budget surplus.

My transmittal of the District of Columbia's budget, as required by law, does not represent an endorsement of its contents.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
July 28, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 29.

Remarks to the Education International World Congress

July 29, 1998

Thank you. First of all, let me thank my longtime friend Mary Hatwood Futrell for that wonderful introduction. And thank you for your warm welcome. I thank the leaders of our education organizations, Bob Chase and Sandy Feldman, for their work, and welcome all of the members of EI here to the United States. I am delighted to join in your Second Congress on your final day in Washington. I hope you've had a successful meeting; even more, I hope you will be going home with new energy for your lifetime commitment to your children and the future of your nations.

It is always an honor for me to meet with educators. As President, I have had the privilege of visiting schools around our Nation and around the world. And wherever I have been, whether in a small village in Uganda or a poor neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro, a town in California or an inner-city school in Chicago or Philadelphia, I always meet

teachers whose dedication to their students is nothing short of heroic, men and women for whom kindling the spark of possibility in every child, from that once-in-a-lifetime mathematics prodigy to a young girl who dreams of being the very first in her family just to finish school and go on to college.

For those people, teaching is not a job, but a mission. I know that, for you, it is such a mission. So let me thank you and your 23 million colleagues across the world for making the education of our world's children your life's work.

We are living in an era of unprecedented hope and possibility but profound challenge. A technological revolution is sweeping across the globe. It is changing the way we live and work and relate to each other. It is binding our economies closer together, whether we like it or not. It is making our world smaller. Today, 100 million people are logging onto the Internet. In just 3 years, that number will be about 700 million.

With all these changes come new challenges. We know that new democracies must be very carefully tended if they are to take root and thrive. We know that with technology advancing at rapid speed, the best jobs and the best opportunities will be available only to those with the knowledge to take advantage of them. We know that if we do not take action, dangerous opportunity gaps between those people and those nations who have these skills and those who do not have them will grow and deepen.

The best way, therefore, to strengthen democracy, to strengthen our Nation, to make the most of the possibilities, and to do the best job of meeting the challenges of the 21st century is to guarantee universal, excellent education for every child on our planet.

Where once we focused our development efforts on the construction of factories and powerplants, today we must invest more in the power of the human mind, in the potential of every single one of our children. A world-class education for all children is essential to combating the fear, the ignorance, the prejudice that undermine freedom all across the globe today in the form of ethnic, religious, and racial hatreds. It is essential to creating a worldwide middle class. It is essential to global prosperity. It is essential

to fulfilling the most basic needs of the human body and the human spirit. That is why the 21st century must be the century of education and the century of the teacher.

As Mary said, throughout my career, first as the Governor of one of our States and now as President, I have worked to make education my top priority. Today I want to share with you what we are doing to provide every American at every stage in life a world-class education. And I want to recommit the United States to working with other nations to advance education as our common cause.

We are working very hard with nations all across the world through our AID programs, our Agency for International Development, and in other ways. At the recent Summit of the Americas in Santiago, Chile, we reaffirmed the commitment of the Americas to work in common on the training of teachers and the development and dissemination of not only technology but educational software, so that we could learn more everywhere we live, so that children in small villages in South America could have access to things which today are only dreams.

When I was in Africa, I reaffirmed the focus of many of our AID programs to be on education. We announced in South Africa a project with our Discovery Channel to try to bring technology and the benefits of it to small African villages. We are working in Bosnia and Croatia to help the students there learn about democracy so that they can preserve what so many have given so much to create, a real sustainable peace in a multi-ethnic democracy.

All across the world America has an interest in seeing education improve. One-third of the adults in the world are illiterate today; two-thirds of them live in the poorest countries. We are doing better. The literacy rate was only 43 percent in 1970. The percentage of our children going to school in 1970 across the world was only 48 percent. Today, it's 77 percent, at least in the primary school years.

And something that's very important to my wife and to me, in 1970, only 38 percent of all schoolchildren were girls. Today the percentage is 68 percent—all girls in school. But think about it, that means 32 percent of the girls who should be in school are not. And

I still visit countries where basic primary education for girls is still a dream in some places. That must not be. If we want to see these societies elevated, if we want to see the economies grow, if we want to see families made whole and able to plan their futures, we must educate all our children, the boys and the girls alike.

Here in America, we have recognized the increasing importance of a college education to our position in the global economy. In our last census, it became clear that young people who had less than 2 years of post-high school education were likely to get jobs where their incomes never grew and were far more likely to become unemployed.

And so we have done everything we can to open the doors of college to all Americans who will work for it. We have made the first 2 years of college virtually free, with a tax credit we call the HOPE scholarship. Through expanded, low-cost student loans and more student work positions, through tax credit and deductions for all college post-graduate and continuing education work by older workers, through giving our young people the opportunity to earn scholarship money by doing community service, we are making all forms of higher education more affordable to all kinds of Americans.

Second, we are working to establish high national standards to ensure that our children, from the earliest years, master the basics. Many of your countries already have national standards. Because in America we have a history of education being the responsibility of state governments and being within the span of control of local school boards, we don't have such national standards.

I believe, in a global economy, every nation should have national standards that meet international norms. I believe that so many students from around the world did better than their American counterparts in the Third International Math and Science Study because their country had set high standards, challenged their students to master rigorous and advanced material, and used national tests to make sure that they did. I want to do the same in America, beginning with high standards in fourth grade reading and eighth

grade mathematics, to give teachers and parents the tools they need to secure our children's future.

Third, we know that good teachers are the key to good school. We are working to reward the most innovative and successful teachers in our classrooms, to help those who fail to perform to move on or improve, and to recruit more of our best and brightest to enter the teaching profession, especially in areas where there are a lot of poor children in desperate need of more help.

Fourth, we are working to create better learning environments by modernizing our schools and reducing class size, especially in the early grades, where research has shown it makes a positive and permanent difference in learning in our country.

Fifth, we are working hard to prepare our children for the demands of the information age by connecting every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000 and by training teachers in these new technologies.

Sixth, we are working to deal with one of America's most painful problems: the presence of violence in our schools. We have a zero-tolerance policy for guns in our schools. Later this year, we will be having our first-ever conference—White House conference in Washington on school safety. I hope and pray this is not a problem in any of the countries here represented, but if it is, we would be glad to have your ideas and to share ours with you. Teaching cannot succeed and learning cannot occur unless classrooms are safe, disciplined, and drug-free. And we are working are on it, and we welcome your support and help.

Next, we are working to end one of the most harmful practices of a public school system that is too often overwhelmed by the challenges it faces and the lack of resources to meet them, the so-called practice of social promotion, where children are passed from grade to grade, even when they don't learn the material first. But we believe that along with ending the practice we must follow the examples set in our city of Chicago, where there is extra help for the children after school and in the summer, so that we don't just identify children as failures, but instead say, "We're going to give you more help until

you succeed." I think that is profoundly important.

Finally, we are working to establish mentoring programs for children in our poorest and most underserved areas, along with guarantees of access to college that they get in their middle school years if they continue to learn and perform, so that when these children are 11 or 12 or 13 they can be told, "If you stay in school and learn and you want to go on to a college or university, we can tell you right now you will have the help you need to do it." I think it is a powerful incentive, and in areas where children have been so used to being ignored for so long and feel that they will always be trapped in poverty, I think it is profoundly important.

Today, there is a vigorous debate going on in our Congress over the nature and extent of our responsibilities as a nation to our children's education. There are some in the other party who don't see eye-to-eye with me on what we should be doing for our public schools. Even as we recognize the importance of raising academics, challenge standards, and challenging our students to meet them, there are those who would actually prohibit the development of national tests for our schools, even if it's voluntary to participate.

Even as more studies confirm what we have already suspected about the importance of early childhood development, some would deny Head Start opportunities to as many as 25,000 of our disadvantaged children. Even as the greatest number of children since the baby boom are enrolling in our schools, some would weaken our efforts to recruit new, highly qualified teachers. Even as hundreds of thousands of high-paying, high-tech jobs all across America go begging for workers, some would cut our investments in education technology and technology training for teachers. Even as the evidence is overwhelming that smaller classes, especially in areas where children have difficulties learning, can make a permanent, positive difference in what children learn and what they continue to learn throughout their lifetime in the early grades, there are those who say we have no business investing national tax dollars in such endeavors.

Believe it or not, there are even some who are trying to kill one of our most successful efforts to provide on-the-job training to our young people and to give them something positive to do and ensure that they stay out of trouble in their free time. For a generation in our country, legislators from both our major political parties have supported the summer jobs program that has helped millions of our most disadvantaged young people appreciate the responsibility of a regular job and the reward of a regular paycheck.

Eliminating summer jobs would mock the very values we Americans cherish most, hard work, responsibility, opportunity. If we truly believe in these things, then we should help to expose all our young people, especially those who need it, to the world of work. If we insist upon responsibility from all our people, then those of us in power must take responsibility for giving our teenagers the jobs that will help them succeed in the future and keep them on a good path today.

If we believe in opportunity for all, then we must not deny our young people this vital springboard to opportunity. I say this to point out to all of you that if you don't get your way on education every day in your own countries, don't be surprised if we don't get to do everything we want to do, either. What seems so self-evident to you and me is still not entirely clear to all decisionmakers. But I want to encourage you to keep up the fight.

In all my visits at home and abroad, I have found out that you can learn a lot about a country's future by visiting its public schools. Does every child—boy and girl, rich and poor—have the same opportunity to learn? Are they engaged by patient, well-trained and inspiring teachers? Do they have access to the materials they need to learn? Are they learning what they need to know to succeed in the country they will live in and in the future that they will create? Do they have opportunities to go on to university if they do well and deserve the chance to do so? Are the schools themselves safe, positive, good places to learn?

We have to build a future together where the answer to all these questions is "yes" in every community, in every nation. I believe we can build a future where every child in every corner of the world, because of the ex-

plosion of technology and because of the dedication of teachers, will have the skills, the opportunity, the education to fulfill his or her God-given potential.

I know this will happen if teachers lead the way. I know that there will be political fights to be fought and won. I know one of your honorees at this conference is being honored for taking huge numbers of children out of bondage and putting them back in school. Some people still view children as little more than a material asset. They are us as children, and they are our future and the future of the world.

When he came to the White House to be honored as our National Teacher of the Year, Philip Bigler said, "To be a teacher is to be forever an optimist." I thank you for your unshakeable optimism. I ask you not only to be vigorous in the classroom but vigorous as citizens. You must not stop until every political leader with any political influence, in any political party, in any nation knows that this is something that has to be lifted above political partisanship. This is something that ought to be beyond all debate.

If you understand how the world is going to work tomorrow and you have any concern about the integrity and the richness of the human spirit in every child, then all of us must join hands to help you succeed in giving all those children the tomorrows they deserve.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:31 a.m. at the Washington Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to Mary Hatwood Futrell, president, Education International; Robert Chase, president, National Education Association; and Sandra Feldman, president, American Federation of Teachers.

Statement on Signing the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 1998

July 29, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 1273, the "National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 1998."

Science, engineering, and technology are potent forces for progress and achievement. Over the past century, advances in science